

LABOR'S DEBATE ON FREE COINAGE.

Workingmen Consider Its Probable Effect Upon Them.

Nine Speakers Urge a New Currency Law Against Nine for Gold.

Seth Low Presides and Cooper Union Is Filled with Men to Hear the Argument.

In Spite of the Non-Partisan Character Bryan's Followers Cheer His Sentiments.

OVERFLOW MEETINGS ON THE OUTSIDE.

Many of the Speeches Show Close Study of Economics and Appreciation of the Arguments of All Writers Pro and Con.

Annex chapter was added to the history of Cooper Union last night.

In it was gathered a vast and sincere assemblage of New York workingmen. They went then to listen to the debate of eighteen of their fellows who had taken time to study the currency problem.

Never, perhaps, in the history of local politics has so much interest been indicated as was shown by the 4,000 people who there found seats and standing room. Outside the hall the street was well filled with people who could not get in. A few ladies were present, and frequently added to the applause.

There was a time limit of ten minutes on all the speeches. The single gold standard advocates alternated with the men who spoke for national bimetallism, to be brought about by the enactment of a law for the free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the ratio of 16 to 1.

Non-Partisan in Character.

All reference to any political party or candidate was carefully avoided, and the non- partisan programme was carried out to the letter.

From the time the speakers came upon the platform it was evident that the spec- tators were in a great measure for free sil- ver, and references to "gold bugs" as "friends of the workingman" invariably brought strong manifestations of disap- proval.

The first speaker favored free silver, and when he referred to the necessity of re- storing the white metal to the position it occupied previous to 1873, generous ap- plause followed. He stated a few seconds, yelled, and suddenly was taken up again, and from a low rumble of moving feet it broke into tumultuous applause.

Almost all the speakers went beyond their allotted time, and were requested by Chairman Seth Low to give the next man a chance.

Cheers for a Bryan Quotation.

When Chairman Low called the attention
of Speaker Sutherland to the fact that his
time was up, that gentleman closed his re-
marks with the celebrated phrase with
which Bryan closed his speech in the Chi-
cago convention, and a thousand hails were
waived in the air and at least 3,000
workingmen swelled the chorus of ap-
plause.

In opening, Seth Low, the chairman, said: It is a great pleasure to me to listen to this debate. I understand that this is an occasion when the platform be- longing to the speakers, and not to the chair. This meeting is the most significant in that it shows that the workingmen of New York appreciate the importance of this question, not only to themselves but to the whole country. It is natural that every one should have an opinion on a subject of such grave import. I will be glad to avail myself of an opportunity to learn how the workingmen look on this question.

The arrangement of the debate is very simple. The silver side being the affirma- tive—gold and produced cheering. Gentlemen, you seem to know that speech is silver. You must remember that silence is gold. The questions under debate are:

1. Will the free coinage of sil- ver help or hurt the man who works for wages?

2. Will the dollars we receive each week buy as much under free silver as they buy now?

3. Will the change to free sil- ver make the condition of the workingman better or worse?

Here a voice interrupted Mr. Low, shout-
ing, "It will." Mr. Low, continuing, said:
I think the speaker who answers "it will"
will argue able to show that he is right. I
will now introduce the first speaker, Mr.
William Eastlake, a telegraph operator.
The gist of the speakers' arguments fol-
low:

William Eastlake (silver)—We hold that, hasasmuch as England can and does fix the value of every ounce of gold in the world at 3 pounds 17 shillings 9 pence, measured in English money, the United States can fix the value of every ounce of silver in the world at \$1.29 per ounce, measured in American money. (Applause.)

We hold that to produce a condition in which the exchange value of a dollar shall have depreciated fifty per cent, would nec- essitate an increase in the volume of money equal in amount to all the dollars now in circulation. We assert that the free coinage of silver will never result in dou- bling the number of dollars in circulation, the demand for their use in exchange re- maining stationary. We, therefore, main- tain that the free coinage of silver by the United States will not result in the so- called fifty-cent dollar. (Applause.)

We hold that the demand for the use of money in exchange is constantly increasing and should be met by an increase in the supply of money if we would preserve even the present parity between the price of commodities and the value of the dollar. We claim that the increase in the volume of money, under an act authorizing the free coinage of silver and, in support of this claim, we point to the report of the Director of the Mint, showing the present stock of silver in the world available for coinage purposes in the United States. (Ap- plause.)

We hold that for thirty years, with

lar, in that it absorbs an ever growing proportion in exchange; from the laborer, more work; from the manufacturer or merchant, more goods. (Applause.)

We hold that, in such a condition, labor is between the upper and the nether mill stones; first, the amount of its wages, measured in dollars, is re- duced to keep pace with the apprecia- tion in the value of money; second, the opportunity to work is restricted by the effort of capital to accommodate itself to the condition. Wages are constantly going down and work, even at half-time, is harder to get. (Applause.)

We hold, on the other hand, that a condition in which the increase in the supply of money keeps pace with the demand for it, thus insuring stability of prices, is a condition offering a sure- ward to capital to engage in productive enterprise, offering a sure return to the merchant in buying and selling commodities, offering a sure return to labor in steady wages and constant employment. (reat applause.)

Charles J. Dumas, proofreader (gold)— The purpose in changing the currency laws, the silver men declare, is because it will not only raise the price of prod- ucts, but increase the earnings of the laboring men. The proposition means that 13,500,000 laboring men are to be legislated against, given a half value dollar for their work, while 5,000,000 planters and a hundred or so mine owners are to receive the benefit of this class legislation.

We are told because the bankers op- pose free coinage, workingmen should be in favor of it. Should not the same analogy apply to quarantine laws?

The average per capita in deposits in savings banks in the United States in 1895 was over \$14—the hoardings of wage earners.

wage-earners come in? It's a "bunco game."

Franklin Quimby, proof-reader (sil- ver)—"Some time ago an old gentle- man known as Uncle Sam started to sell a load of provisions to market. His excellent team of horses—one a bright yellow and the other a pure white, pulled together beautifully. On his way he met his portly neighbor, John Bull, who invited him to have a drink, and while Sam's back was turned, John slipped a knock-out drop into his glass. The influence of the knock-out drop Sam saw "double," and thinking his yellow horse a whole team in itself, he decided to get along without the un- necessary white horse. Sam then was left with a slow, stumbling, overbur- dened animal, incapable of getting his rapidly depreciating commodities to the market, yet with an appetite that en- abled it to eat its head out of Sam's provisions and to actually grow fat do- ing nothing.

With every fall of prices of its prod- ucts unorganized labor suffers a re- duction in wages. Organized labor can largely effect and does effect wages, but neither organized or unorganized labor can make more jobs.

Free coinage will help the wage-ear- ners in this way. Free coinage will put more money in circulation; more money will raise prices; raised prices will en- courage investments of capital; invest- ment of capital will create a demand for labor, and the demand for labor raises wages.

Money has two characteristics resem- bling those of human beings. Money which does the most work will ask the most pay. If money can make money without working, it will lie around idle.

Thus gold rises in price because it is asked to do the greatest service, and when prices of corresponding products fall, capital will invest in safe gold bonds rather than take chances in un- certain business enterprises.

Gold advocates say we can purchase our necessities at half price. An old

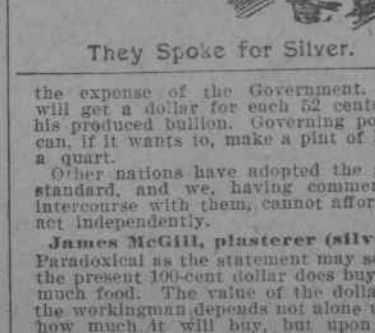
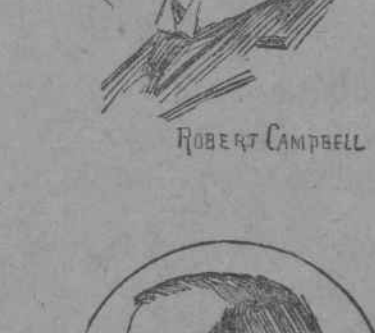
tries a change from a gold to a silver standard has been beneficial to the in- terests of the wage-earner. On the con- trary, in no civilized country of the world has the degradation of the masses been so great and the wages of labor been so poorly remunerated as in those of the so-called silver countries, name- ly, Japan, India, Mexico, and nearly all the South American Republics.

He points to the fact that the prices of all agricultural products are lower this year than ever before, and at- tributes it to our monetary system, which he knows perfectly well that on account of our super-abundant harvest and the competition our farmers are meeting with in the markets of the world grain producing countries such as Russia, India and Argentine Republic, the demand for our products have been restricted. Those are all free silver countries, where the agricultural laborer receives the minimum of wages for the maximum amount of toil, or in other words, the farm laborer in those coun- tries receives less than one-quarter the wage of the American farm laborer.

Will they explain how much the wages of labor have been increased in Mexico, in Russia and in South Amer- ican republics?

Presuming that we arrive at a silver basis—it means that the value of every- thing would be doubled at once; but would the value of labor rise in propor- tion to the price of the laborer's neces- sities? Is the laborer not the last to feel it in a rise of wages, or, on the other hand, if a period of depression overtakes the business community, is he not the first to feel it in having his wages cut down?

Charles W. Hoadley, electrical worker (silver)—There is a grandeur about this meeting that impresses an American citizen profoundly. It re- minds me of the war of '76, because American citizens were tired of paying tribute to England. The free silver



the amount of commodities that he can buy with the dollar after he has got it. He had much better have a dollar that will buy only fifteen loaves of bread in a market when he has to work only five hours than to have a dollar that will buy thirty loaves of bread in a market where he has to work fifteen hours a day for the dollar, or has no chance to work at all.

With the more expensive of these dol- lars one hour of labor gives him three loaves of bread; with the cheaper of these dollars one hour of labor gives him only two loaves of bread.

It is better for a workman to earn a dollar that will buy five loaves than it is to be without a dollar that would buy 1,000, 200,000 or 1,000,000 loaves.

Free silver will not abolish money monopoly, but will lessen it and as a consequence wages will rise.

Charles A. Marenti, checker on the Penn- sylvania Railroad (gold)—A political man, seeking the vote of both the la- borer and the rich man in the prepara- tion of a speech, asked if a certain thing would insult the laboring man. His adviser answered: "You can insult the wage-earner as much as you please, but don't touch his pocket!" This ques- tion touches the pocket and that is why I favor the gold standard.

I want the wage earner to stand for honest money and patriotism. I want I, with only 70,000,000 people, prove 351 grains of silver to be worth a dol- lar, when none of the other nations of the world have been able to prove it?

They say that free silver is the work- ingman's friend. An uproar followed. It could not be quelled. The speaker, holding up his hand, invoking silence, yelled furiously and re- peatedly:

"I deny it!" Seven times did he make the denial, and each time was called.

John P. Walsh, shoemaker (silver). —You all have heard of the gold and silver side, the sentimental and scien- tific. I will give you some common sense. What you people want is a dol- lar and not the empty pockets you now have. It astonishes me to see the in- terest all millionaires, with Mark Hanna at their head, take in this struggle. Now, let's be serious. From what I see I think the people here want the Democracy that Bryan stands at the head. (Thunders of applause.)

The circulation of money to industry is like the circulation of the blood in the body. Stop the blood, and the physical body dies; so with industry. After the war many men or women ap- plied for work and failed to find it. Since 1873 tramping has become a re- cognized business.

Joseph O. Judges, hotel clerk (gold)— If the poor man has not got the silver to coin, how is he going to coin it? Somebody has got it, and he is going to keep it.

When I send money over to my poor old mother in Ireland, I want to send her a dollar marked with the stamp of this Government; that will be worth a dollar over there—worth every penny of the value written on its face. When I have worked and earned my money, whose money is it? Is it mine or is it my employer's? It is mine now, but it would not be under a free silver system, for the only men who are in the business of taking other people's money are those who propose to take 53 cents worth of silver and palm it off on you for a dollar.

R. N. Campbell, a compositor (silver)— —We were informed that this is to be a campaign of education. I know I can leave it to you which side in this de- bate has shown evidences of deep thought. I fail to find any argument to answer.

"We have been called advocates of reputation and dishonest money. One of the moral principles taught us at our mother's knee was that if we had done wrong we can satisfy justice only by restoring the right. In 1873 began the systematic robbery of the common money of the common people. All the silver people ask to-day is, 'give back that which you have stolen. Right the wrong you have done us.' The Constitu- tion of the country provides for the coinage of both gold and silver.

I've got one but I want these people to crack. Statistics show the annual loss of gold in this country to be \$28,- 000,000. The annual output of the coun- try is \$44,000,000. Our debts must be paid in gold. If we are running \$5,000,- 000 a year short, in thirty years we'll have \$150,000,000 more to pay in addi- tion to the \$282,000,000 of bonds that we have recently sold to pay our debts and make up the fast increasing defi- ciency.

BRYAN AT ORANGE TO-DAY.

Will Speak at the Depot This Afternoon and Will Receive a Royal Welcome.

Orange, N. J., Sept. 22.—Presidential Can- didate William Jennings Bryan will be in Orange and speak from his private car at the Orange depot between 3 and 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon. Such was the sub- stance of a telegram received by Secretary S. J. Klauber, of the Democratic City Cen- tral Committee, here this morning.

The news soon spread, and at noon prepa- rations had been made by the several Demo- cratic organizations to give Mr. Bryan an ovation. President W. F. Hamilton, of the City Central Committee, said that the mem- bers, numbering over three hundred, will turn out in a body, cannon will boom and a royal reception will be given the candi- date. James M. Reiden, of the East Orange Democracy, said that that organization would parade to Orange to greet Mr. Bryan.

The cigar factory of Isaac Schenckel, on Main street, will shut down, and at those factories which do not shut down all political fair will stop work and go to see and hear Mr. Bryan.

The officers of the Democratic City Cen- tral Committee will meet the party at Summit. The big ratification meeting and banquet raising here to-morrow night pre- tend to be the event of the campaign. The East Orange Democracy will also attend this meeting in a body.

BURNS GOT ONE ON HIS WIFE.

She Was Going to Send Him to Jail, But He Got There Ahead of Her.

Thomas Burns, of No. 587 Warren street, Brooklyn, leaned against the desk in the Butler Street Police Station Monday night, and said:

"Drunk, Sergeant. Give me sixty years. Got nice wife and ten children, but I'm tired. Send me away."

In the Butler Street Police Court yester- day morning, he wanted to be sent away for forty years. Justice Tighe made it twenty-nine days.

"Good," said Burns. "Now, she'll have to come and get me out. 'Nice woman, my wife, but she cannot get the best of me.'" Mrs. Burns smiled when told what had become of her husband. "Well, well," said she. "I told him I'd send him to jail if he did not sober up, and now I must go and get him out. He is a good man when he's sober!"

Scientist Pelted with Eggs.

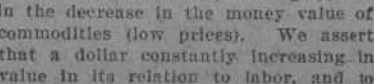
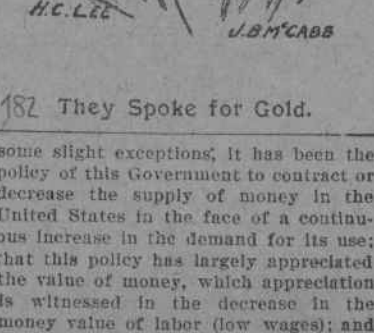
James Allman, of No. 18 First street, of this city, tried to convert citizens of White Plains to Socialism Saturday night. John Shanghauser, of Kensico, drove him to the place in a wagon, from which he began speaking in the open air to a crowd. Im- mediately he was pelted with tomatoes and aged eggs, and was soon thereafter ar- rested with his friend. They were liberated with a reprimand yesterday by Justice Morgan.

Dr. Halsey in Failing Health.

Dr. William McDonald Halsey, formerly a New York school principal, but now a resident of Mount Vernon, has disposed of his school at that place, and with his fam- ily has gone to Haines, where his father lives. For a long time Dr. Halsey has been suffering from Bright's disease, and this is the cause of his retirement.

Mrs. Melnecke Fined in Court.

Mrs. Jessie Melnecke, the divorced wife of C. W. Melnecke, a druggist, at No. 257 Greenwich street, who a year or so ago converted her husband and a layer, was fined \$5 in the Centre Street Court yesterday for disorderly conduct. She pleaded that she was pelted with tomatoes and aged eggs, and her arrest followed.



Workingmen's Currency Debate in Cooper Union.

Seth Low acted as chairman of the meeting, and eighteen men spoke ten minutes each. Those advocating a single gold standard alternated with the speakers who believe it wisdom for the United States to pass a free coinage law.

Despite the evidences that wage ear- ners in America are near the starvation point under the gold standard the threat of free coinage is offered as a gambler's chance that if we have it the wages of the workingmen will eventually rise.

But when we get free coinage an effort to force wages into an advance under the new condition of affairs will pro- duce an era the terrors of which I dare not contemplate.

Charles Sotheran, of Local Assembly No. 9,733, Knights of Labor (sil- ver).—We silver men are handicapped by the charge that we are monometal- lism, whereas we are advocates of bi- metallism. Between 1792 and 1873 the free coinage of silver was continuous and our prosperity increased accordingly. What happened then under bi- metallism will happen again, and will accrue to the wage workers' benefit.

The applause that followed was so long that before Mr. Sotheran had been able to proceed more than a minute the chairman informed him that his time had expired. "Very well," said the speaker, "I have only one more word to say:

What, though the power of wealth ordains The people to deride; Enough true manhood yet remains To sweep that power aside. And in its place again proclaim That truth so nobly told: "Manhood cannot be cradled Upon a cross of gold."

M. J. Nerney, carriage trimmer (gold).—I don't have to have a set speech to tell you what is in my heart on this subject. It is a plain case of bread and butter. Let us see how the free coinage of silver will take the bread out of the poor man's mouth.

A man works for \$12.00 a week, or 1,200 cents. What makes it that much? The little gold dollar that must meas- ure each 100 cents. (Cries of "wrong.")

You might as well pass a law to have free and unlimited horsehoes in New York. If a man comes with iron weigh- ing four horsehoes worth, he should receive four horsehoes, ready made, from the blacksmith. But where does the blacksmith come in? Where does Uncle Sam come in? They say to him, give me dollar for every 60 cents I bring you; and give not only to me, but to all the world.

The silver mine owner will be the man who will get the first whack at the blacksmith's come in? Where does the blacksmith come in? They say to him, give me dollar for every 60 cents I bring you; and give not only to me, but to all the world.

Irishman once said: "Belabers, I could live on six pence a day in the coun- try." He was asked why he belabers, I couldn't get the six- pence."

Alexander Richardson (gold)—Free sil- ver will not increase the wages of the laboring men, but the chances are it will disorganize business.

With more money coined, the free silverists claim, there will be a great circulating medium, and that the la- boring classes will get more of it. In the twenty years from 1873 to 1893 we coined fifty-two times as many silver dollars as we did since the foundation of the Government. What does this prove? Simply that the quantity in cir- culation has got nothing whatever to do with the present depression in busi- ness.

The silver men claim that the bad times started with the so-called coinage of 1873. Now, what are the facts? The wage earner to-day receives 60 per cent more in gold for his day's la- bor than he did in 1880, and yet with his earnings to-day he can buy nearly twice as many manufactured articles, owing to the cost of production of the same having fallen from 40 to 50 per cent by the introduction of improved appliances. And yet these silver men tell us that the act of 1873 cut prices in two.

Has the price of mutton been cut in two? Has the price of butter been cut in two? Has the price of ham been cut in two? Has the price of beef been cut in two?

No. Mutton has advanced 28 per cent; butter has advanced 28 per cent; ham has advanced 28 per cent. All commodities where hand labor enters into the cost of production have risen in value since 1873 owing to the in- crease in wages; for instance, out of the whole list of metal implements (thirty- four in number), one only, anvils, has advanced (18 per cent), because they are produced by hand labor methods. Improved machinery having been intro- duced into the manufacture of the other thirty-three, their cost of production, accordingly, has decreased, and prices therefore have fallen from 40 to 45 per cent.

The only way which will enable us to get an increase of wages is to draw from Nature's storehouse, and make Nature give us something for nothing.

All the governments in the world can- not make a penny more of money. And stamp upon a piece of metal that a half is a whole.

Thomas J. Ford, of the Brass Work- ers' Association (Gold).

As member of a labor organization, I propose to answer some of the propo- sitions of the silver people. They tell us that some of the results that would follow the free and unlimited coinage of silver would be that wages would be advanced, business would prosper, and the farmer would get better prices for his products; but they base all these dreams on theory, and cannot show a single instance where in other coun-

tries a change from a gold to a silver standard has been beneficial to the in- terests of the wage-earner. On the con- trary, in no civilized country of the world has the degradation of the masses been so great and the wages of labor been so poorly remunerated as in those of the so-called silver countries, name- ly, Japan, India, Mexico, and nearly all the South American Republics.

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Charles O. Eckholm, a railroad